

ignoring bill language or Congressional intent.

Some of the problems we are hearing about in Medicare from health care providers are all results of actual BBA language. Yes, they are. The Health Subcommittee is planning to provide relief in those areas. But, as Senator ROTH and Chairman THOMAS have said recently, there is also a lot HCFA can do.

The BBA gives HCFA significant power over how things are implemented. The risk adjuster for Medicare+Choice payments is a perfect example. Many of my colleagues and I have heard concerns about the risk adjuster the administration has designed. One very important concern is how this risk adjuster will impact some very special programs, especially innovative programs that seniors want and that the frail elderly seniors need so desperately.

HCFA obviously understands the grave impact the interim risk adjuster will have on these programs. In fact, HCFA exempted them from the risk adjuster for the first year. But the argument which compelled the agency to exempt them for one year remains the same and just as powerful for all the years under the interim risk adjuster.

Now, I might be just a plain Norwegian from Lake Woebegone, Mr. Speaker, but even I cannot understand why the agency is not exempting them for the entire interim period. That just makes good common Governor Jessie Ventura sense. If they have the authority to do it for 1 year, it seems they have the authority to do it for multiple years. Conversely, if they do not have authority for all the years, then how do they have the authority to do it for one?

I see nothing in the BBA which prohibits the agency from exempting them for more than 1 year. Even if I were to accept HCFA's claim that only Congressional action allows a multiple-year exemption, that still would not allow me to understand why HCFA is not supporting the bill I introduced to provide the multiple exemption. They tell providers, well, we need Congress to pass a bill. So I introduced one. Then they come up with the multiple weak arguments against the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I am offering to address any substantive concerns in a reasonable way, in a reasonable common-sense way, and I hope we will be having such an exchange on Friday in the Health Subcommittee. I invite the administration to join me for the sake of frail, eligible, elderly beneficiaries in Minnesota and across this Nation.

UNITED STATES-CHINA MILITARY EXCHANGES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, 2 days ago, the U.S. Secretary of De-

fense, William Cohen, told reporters that he hopes the U.S. military will resume contacts with the Communist Chinese military. At the very same time that Secretary Cohen was speaking, in Shanghai, Chinese dictator Jiang Zemin was speaking to a gathering of elite U.S. corporate chairmen who were in China to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the communist takeover of the mainland of China.

Jiang Zemin blatantly renewed threats by the communist regime to conquer Taiwan by force, and then he threatened the United States. "We will not allow any foreign force to create or support Taiwanese independence."

I have in my possession, Mr. Chairman, Pentagon documents detailing the Clinton Administration's exchange program between the United States and Communist China. It is a military exchange program. This program of military exchanges has, in effect, assisted the Communist Chinese Air Force in improving its capabilities to conduct bombing raids on Taiwan.

The May 1999 Air Force exchange, and this was an exchange in May of 1999, this year, introduced the Communist Chinese, and these are military leaders in the Communist Chinese military, to our most advanced Air Force capabilities. This may eventually cause the death of Americans serving in any U.S. air or naval forces that would attempt to defend Taiwan against communist attack.

This is mind boggling. I pray that those people who are listening to this or reading it in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD or my colleagues will please pay attention. We are talking about training Communist Chinese military people in ways that will result in the death of thousands, if not tens of thousands, of American military personnel. It is outrageous. It is incredible. What can you say? What can we do to draw attention to this absolute outrage?

The Chinese Communist People's Liberation Air Force and government air traffic control delegation visited the United States between May 9 and May 20 of this year. Air traffic control certainly sounds harmless. The Pentagon documents used to brief these Chinese visitors show that they observed or participated in advanced combat Air Force exercises with the U.S. 389th Fighter Squadron at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona. They also observed fighter bomber operations at Edwards Air Force Base test center in California.

At these exercises, they experienced the real or simulated flights of bombing runs and strafing runs by our most sophisticated military aircraft. Especially useful for the Communist Chinese in their potential attack by the Communist Chinese on Taiwan was the briefing they got, and these DOD documents verify this, that they were shown how the military can use civilian airfields to conduct military operations.

What we see by these DOD documents is that our government, our De-

fense Department, showed the Communist Chinese how we would use our radar systems for air traffic control of fighter bombers at remote airfields.

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We showed the Communists how to use AWACs in coordinating bombing campaigns. We showed the Communists how we coordinate our AWACS with in-flight refueling for long-range missions.

Mr. Speaker, earlier in this session, when I discovered this military exchange program and made it public, the Congress appealed to the Defense Department and passed legislation to end military exchanges that would benefit the warfighting skills of the Chinese military.

These DOD documents prove that the Pentagon has ignored the will of Congress. Instead, they have not only jeopardized the 24 million people who live on Democratic Taiwan but this administration is in effect teaching the Communist Chinese how to improve their ability to kill America's defenders.

Again, this is bizarre. It is almost surrealistic. I beg my colleagues to pay attention to this. I beg the administration to come to their senses, quit trying to treat the world's worst human rights abuser, a regime that constantly reminds us that they do not believe in anything that America believes in, hates everything America stands for. I beg them to quit trying to call these people our strategic partners and training them how to do their military.

I stand ready to give my colleagues all of these documents upon request.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. BROWN of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WATERS addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TRIBUTE TO BRADLEY CURRY, A GREAT AMERICAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. Speaker, in the days ahead we will debate the final actions that we will take on the budget. We have already tried to bring tax relief to the American people, and we in this Congress day in and day out are fortunate enough to be the governors of a great country that is the freest, safest, and richest country in the world.

There are Americans day in and day out, as we cast these debates and cast our votes, who back home are working to pay the taxes that finance this government, volunteering their time in civic activities to make their community better, and day in and day out do the work of this country.

I rise here today for just a moment to join many Americans who will next week in Washington, D.C. pay tribute to a great American, to a great Georgian, and to a personal friend of mine, Mr. Bradley Curry, a great businessman who built a company with his employees and his partners known as Rock-Tenn, a national, if not world leader, in packaging and in box board.

While he did that, he raised a wonderful family, committed his time to civic activities for the best of our community, whether helping to solve the problems of our public hospital, Grady Memorial, work in a voluntary think-tank called Research Atlanta, or join with hundreds of other Atlantans to make a dream come true to bring the Olympic Games, the Centennial Olympic Games, to our city in 1996.

Above all else, Brad Curry is a dedicated American. His partisanship is red, white, and blue. He works for the best of our country and business, the best in mankind in our community and, most importantly of all, for the continuing foundation of our freedom that we enjoy.

So for this moment on this floor, I rise to pay tribute to Bradley Curry, who will retire at the end of this year from the Rock-Tenn Corporation, but will not retire from his tireless efforts on behalf of his city, his State and his country. I ask all in this Congress to join me in paying their highest respects to Bradley Curry of Atlanta, Georgia, upon his retirement from the Rock-Tenn Corporation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. EHLERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, today America is at a crossroads. Our people head into the 21st century having witnessed remarkable events all across the globe. We have seen the rise and we have seen the fall of tyranny, Nazism and Communism, with Americans being instrumental in the destruction of both.

We have seen technological and scientific developments unparalleled in history. America itself is more prosperous than it has been at any time in

its existence. The United States is now recognized as the unchallenged superpower in the world.

Mr. Speaker, at the same time that our Nation has seen so many achievements, we must admit that there are some areas where we are not making the progress that we should. Today, Mr. Speaker, I regret to say that in one area where we are losing ground is our treatment of religious believers. We are witnessing a rising level of bigotry against people of faith, especially Christians.

Mr. Speaker, let me talk about some of the most recent examples that I have seen. The first three followed after the tragic shootings in Littleton, Colorado, and Fort Worth, Texas.

After the memorial service for the families and victims of Littleton, Colorado, on May 1, the May 1 issue of the Denver Post editorialized against what it called, "the disenfranchising nature of this memorial service."

According to the editorial page writers, "While the service deftly satisfied the needs of fundamentalist Christians, it estranged too many others who came in search of healing and due to the fact that the primary entertainment was by Christian singers Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith, and the key speech was by the Reverend Franklin Graham, son of Billy Graham, it drove away a sizable number of people who had come to mourn the deaths." The editorial went on to say, "We urge State officials to learn from the error and plan future events to be inclusive, not divisive."

In other words, Mr. Speaker, the editors of the Denver Post objected to the families and victims turning to their faith in this terrible time of grief.

According to the May 18 edition of the Washington Times, plans to create a memorial for the family and victims of the Columbine shootings at the Foothill Parks and Recreational District near the high school were scrapped after the Freedom From Religion Foundation threatened legal action. The spokesman for the group said that the memorial would make non-Christians feel unwelcome at that park.

The day after the tragic shootings in Fort Worth this month, the Washington Times reported that Attorney General Janet Reno was asked the next day whether she thought that these shootings had anything to do with hatred or religious bigotry. Attorney General Janet Reno warned reporters that it was too early to characterize the Fort Worth shooting as a hate crime.

This reticence was in stark contrast to other cases of bigotry. For instance, last year the Justice Department offered its resources to help prosecutors prove racial bias in another Texas case involving the dragging death of James Byrd within days of that tragic killing.

It has been 2 weeks since the shootings in Fort Worth, and we are still waiting for the Attorney General.

Mr. Speaker, there are still other examples. Whether we wish to admit it or not, Christians are now subject to ridicule, mistreatment and bigotry, pure and simple.

The television show "Nothing Sacred" lived up to its billing by trying to develop storylines with ministers of the cloth engaging in immoral activity or finding ways to belittle people of faith altogether. According to the New York Post which ran in March 1998, "Nothing Sacred" set an all-time low for viewership last year on a major network with 94 percent of the available market bypassing the program.

Hollywood is not any better. Movies such as this summer's release of Stigmata attack the Catholic Church, accusing it of being on a millennium-long crusade to stamp out the true teachings of Christ.

Mr. Speaker, there is more evidence that our society, rather than protecting religious freedom, is discouraging religious expression. According to the Associated Press, the ACLU sued the City of Republic, Missouri, on behalf of Jean Webb, a Wiccan witch, to have its city seal altered to remove the fish symbol.

The May 6 article stated that the ACLU planned to also argue that since the symbol is often found in Christian establishments, not non-Christian ones, and that most of the people who wrote letters supporting the fish symbol identified it as a Christian symbol, the ACLU had plenty of evidence that the city's support of keeping the fish symbol constituted an establishment of religion.

The Chicago Tribune reported that the ACLU this year sued the Chicago Public Schools because of its activities with the Boy Scouts of America. Why? The April 26 news story indicated that it was because the Boy Scout oath pledges that a good scout will obey God. By the ACLU's reasoning, such an oath, because it mentions God, makes the Boy Scouts a religious organization which should not be allowed on school property.

The USA Today ran a story last week announcing that the Augusta, Kansas, school board has revoked a policy that allowed students to lead classmates in prayer over the school intercom after the American Civil Liberties Union challenged the policy as unconstitutional.

On the May 21 broadcast of CNN's Crossfire, Barry Lynn, the executive director of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, went so far as to criticize the acclaim given to Cassie Bernall, the young girl who was shot at Columbine High because she would not renounce her faith.

He said, I think that what we have done here is to take this one victim, turn it into an example of martyrdom, and then use it to become the springboard for even more exploitation of this tragedy by people with a religious political agenda.

Such insensitivity would have been denounced if he had said the same